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Writing Anxiety among EFL Students of John Senior High School

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Abstract
The objective of this is to examine the level of deep writing anxiety experienced by high school students in learning English as a foreign language for various reasons and consequences of the anxiety. Many results of research on scientific papers in this decade indicate that writing anxiety in foreign languages has negative effects on attitudes, success, student achievement, hinder the writing process, and reduces interest in writing. In this study, the quantitative research method is used to measure the level of anxiety experienced by students. This study adapted the Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory questionnaire compiled by (Cheng, 2004). The results showed that the participants had high and moderate writing anxiety. Cognitive anxiety showed the highest result. Whereas, avoidance anxiety was reported in the second position of writing anxiety. The lowest score was performed by somatic anxiety that occurred in the result. They have problems in choosing a topic to write on, finding helpful ideas, time constraints, and a lack of effective feedback are the most worrying factors, followed by grammar, brainstorming, idea organization, and topic sentence writing.

Keywords: avoidance anxiety; cognitive anxiety; somatic anxiety; writing anxiety

INTRODUCTION

One of the essentials language skills that high school students must acquire is writing skills. In my context of the study, high school students in Indonesia are required to write various particular genres or topics (short functional, descriptive, narrative texts, and others). Learners are also required to write a written report and compile the results of a mini-research study in a foreign language at the end of the semester. The process of writing genre texts begins with writing an introduction, content, and closing. Writing assignments are important things for students, however, writing assignments are not a piece of cake for them. Especially for students with minimal language proficiency backgrounds, where they have no previous experience composing various text genres. In contrast to students who have more abilities and good foreign language skills, they will easily write a piece of writing with a little obstacle.

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by Ena Ouda Teda

IDEAS

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The essential purpose of writing is to communicate in writing forms. The written forms must be well organized, written correctly, and meaningful to the reader (Haritini et al., 2020; Nurhalimah, 2019; Setyowati et al., 2020). The writers should manage the accuracy organization and meaning are just some of the elements that certain readers demand in particular contexts. For instance, academic or scientific writing in the second language is required in academic institutions such as English departments and universities in general. Learning or even acquiring these writing components is not an easy task for students (A. Ariyanti, 2017; Hjortshoj, 2010; Jawas, 2019; Setyowati et al., 2020). Therefore, learning to write written texts for a specific context or purpose requires effort and time (Liu, 2020; Wang & Zeng, 2020). During the writing process, students may face obstacles such as language barriers that could lead to anxiety (Nawas, 2020; Putra, 2013; Wang & Zeng, 2020). For example, is students can feel anxious when the teacher gives them feedback and comment. (Rudiyanto, 2017; Umam, 2017a).

Moreover, foreign language anxiety is claimed to be the main factor that hinders the development of writing English by students, especially in academics papers (Ariyanti, 2020; Sabti et al., 2019; Sivaci, 2020; Wang & Zeng, 2020). At the high school level, anxiety arises when students will write an essay with various limitations such as lack of vocabulary and feel unaccustomed to writing in a foreign language (Hartono & Maharani, 2020; Hudayani et al., 2020; Setyowati et al., 2020). Experts argued that fear of negative assessments by teachers and peers, and fear of writing under time pressure also make it difficult for students to improve their English writing skills (Jebreil et al., 2015; Nazari et al., 2020; Rezaei & Jafari, 2014; Türnük & Aydın, 2020; Yayli & Genc, 2019). According to Horwitz et al. (1986), foreign language anxiety can be associated with three different anxieties associated with the state of academic and social assessment. This anxiety can be measured by several criteria, among others; communication fear, the anxiety of negative judgment, and test anxiety. Communication anxiety refers to a form of shame characterized by fear or anxiety to interact with other people. Students can feel shy, awkward, and afraid when they have to engage in real conversations, even when students are mature enough to think. The fear of negative feedback is anxiety about other people's judgments, some students will avoid the circumstances in which they will be evaluated and the fear that others will judge their papers (A. Ariyanti, 2017; D. P. Ariyanti, 2020; Rudiyanto, 2017; Umam, 2017b).

Students who have concerns such as the lack of possibility to write in English, panic when asked to write in English, low self-esteem, do not know how to start writing, and fear of writing assignments (Abrar Ajmal & Humaira Irfan, 2020; Horwitz et al., 1986; Tosun, 2018; Yosintha, 2020). If students show such phenomena, it means that students experience writing anxiety. Writing anxiety shows a big role for students in having a negative influence on writing progress and writing acquisition. The intensity of such concerns may be higher at the high school level.

Previous studies on writing anxiety around the world had been conducted. For instance, Kabigting et al. (2020) conducted a study about foreign language anxiety, a study that explored the writing anxiety experienced by secondary school students in Philippine. The study reported more than eighty percent of their participants marked high anxiety in writing and showed that a higher level of anxiety has a negative impact on learner's performance. The next research showed that the results of statistical and qualitative analysis with the attitudes of students towards the practice of making sentences illustrate that students of undergraduate English majors in China in the two classes had less writing anxiety after the practice of making sentences, and this teaching method also had a beneficial effect on students' writing (Liu, 2020). Another mixed method design study conducted in Iran reported that writing anxiety could be facilitating and debilitating the students' capability in writing in the English language due to limited practices and activities that they had done. Moreover, the high-level writing anxiety, with cognitive anxiety as its main type, is reflected in a preoccupation with high performance and expectations, and fear of negative teacher feedback, low self-esteem, and poor linguistic knowledge as its primary sources (Rezaei & Jafari, 2014).

In Indonesia, many previous studies on anxiety in different contexts had been conducted. In their study, Arindra & Ardi (2020) investigated the correlation between students' writing anxiety and the use of Writing Assessment Rubrics among Critical Reading and Writing classes at Sanata Dharma University. The result showed that students' writing anxiety and their use of writing assessment rubrics were mostly at a moderate level. The analytical number using SPSS showed that students' writing anxiety correlated with their use of writing assessment rubrics. The correlation was a strong negative correlation with r= -0.704, meaning that when the students knew that their writing was to be assessed with the rubric, they would use the writing assessment rubrics optimally and had low anxiety. On the other hand, the students who used no rubrics had high anxiety. Another study was done by Fitrinada et al. (2018) suggested that the correlational analysis was significant between students' writing anxiety and their achievement. This study implicated that there was a significant correlation between students' English writing anxiety and writing achievement. Also, there was a significant correlation between students' somatic, avoidance, cognitive behavior anxiety, and writing achievement. The authors suggested that there was a significant relationship between writing anxiety and writing achievement. The same result reported by A. Ariyanti (2017) used the term foreign language anxiety to described students' anxiety in Samarinda, Indonesia where she found that the students' anxiety mainly gave negative effects on their performance in writing.

The previous study shown above has inspired researchers to explore foreign language anxiety in students' writing as well. The difference with previous research is that the study was conducted on John Senior High School students in the context of Bandung, West Java, Indonesia. The study of writing anxiety in this context is still limited. Another difference with previous studies is that this study employs a writing anxiety questionnaire specifically. However, the components

and some items of writing an anxiety questionnaire are based on Cheng's (2004) work.

Anxiety in writing language can be called as foreign language anxiety writing. It is considered a specific form of anxiety because writing anxiety is limited to specific language learning situations (Horwitz et al., 1986). Apart from writing anxiety, the term writing apprehension can also describe anxiety or anxiety in writing. Only the term writing anxiety or foreign language anxiety is used consistently in this study.

In general, there are many categories of anxiety. For example, Dörnyei (2005) categorized anxiety to facilitate anxiety and debilitating anxiety; and nature and state anxiety. Other categories of anxiety are communication worry, evaluation anxiety, and negative evaluation fear (Horwitz et al., 1986). Besides, (Cheng, 2004) suggested three components of writing anxiety, namely physiological (somatic), cognitive, and behavioral components. However, only the writing anxiety component written by Cheng (2004) will be elaborated on in this paper. Consider the importance of identifying the types of student anxiety and looking at the possibility of research on students' writing anxiety levels in the course of writing in high school that has not been explored much in previous studies This study is designed to determine the types of the anxiety of students in John Senior High School of Bandung, Indonesia. The objectives of this study are to find out types of writing anxiety that usually face by students of John Senior High School and the levels of students' writing anxiety among students of John Senior High School.

METHOD

Following the purpose of this study, namely to reveal the phenomenon of writing anxiety that usually faces by students and the levels of students' writing anxiety among students of John Senior High School, this study used a quantitative descriptive research design. This study aims to reveal the level, general types, and main causes of writing anxiety. The researcher used nonprobability sampling which the participants selected by the researcher. According to Griffee (2012), nonprobability sampling is "any type of sampling that allows the TREE [Teacher-Researcher-Educator-Evaluator] to select some persons for inclusion in a sample without allowing others" (p. 66). The whole population of John Senior High School is 182 students. However, considering the limitation of the time to conduct the study, the researcher only selected sixty-seven participants for the academic year 2020/2021 participated in this research, consisting of 36 females and 31 males. The age of the participants ranged from 16-18 years old.

In collecting data, the researcher employs Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI) by Cheng (2004) used as the instruments of the paper. SLWAI which was introduced by Cheng (2004)) was a valid instrument for measuring writing anxiety levels, especially in a second language context. The reason for choosing this inventory as a measure of writing anxiety is because it has been proven to be very reliable and valid through correlation and factor analysis

(Cheng, 2004). The questionnaire of this study consisted of 22 close-ended items. Each participant took part to answer a closed-ended questionnaire using the Likert Scale items of "1-strongly disagree", "2-disagree", "3-unsure", "4-agree", "and "5-strongly agree".

For data collection, the researcher asked permission from the principal to conduct research at the school and collect the data. The researchers distributed questionnaires to the homeroom teacher in every class. Also, the researcher collaborated with English teachers and class leaders. The questionnaire was distributed through So Go Survey (https://www.sogosurvey.com/) to avoid traditional questionnaire administration due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The students accessed the questionnaire through their computers and smartphones. As outlined in the questionnaire, the participants were given a detailed overview of the key goals of this study and their relevance in the field of foreign language anxiety in writing.

There were several steps in analyzing the data. The first step in analyzing data was processing the data obtained from the questionnaire. The data collected from a close-ended questionnaire were analyzed using Microsoft Excel and IBM SPSS 25. The researcher looked out for the score of each item in the questionnaire. Table 1 presents the Likert Scale and the converted scores used to measure students' foreign language anxiety.

Table 1: The Converted Score of the Frequency

Frequency	The converted Score
Strongly Disagree	1
Disagree	2
Unsure	3
Agree	4
Strongly Agree	5

The score ranged from 1 to 5. Here is the formula, as follows:

$$Score = \frac{\sum [(F.1) + (F.2) + (F.3) + (F.4) + (F.5)]}{\sum N}$$

Notes:
F: The number of students based on the degree of frequency
$\sum N$: The number of total participants

The questionnaire items were classified into three categories, namely the Somatic Anxiety subscale (Items 2, 7, 9, 13, 15, 18, 23), the Avoidance Behavior subscale (Items 4, 6, 12, 14, 19, 22, 27), the Cognitive Anxiety subscale (Items 1, 3,

10, 17, 21, 24, 26). The results of the study showed that SLWAI has strong internal consistency, respectable test-retest reliability, sufficient convergence, and satisfactory criterion-related validity (Cheng, 2004). The maximum score on the Likert scale is 5 and the minimum score is 1. Seven items (1, 4, 8, 21, 22, 26, 27) in SWLAI are categorized as negatively worded and the scores are reversed before they are concluded to produce a total score. A total score above 65 points indicates a high level of writing anxiety, a total score below 50 points indicates a low level of writing anxiety, and a total score in between indicates a moderate level of writing anxiety (Aytaç Demirçivi, 2020; Cheng, 2004; Huerta et al., 2017; Karabıyık & Özkan, 2017; Walker & Panayides, 2014).

Results

Levels of Students' Writing Anxiety

In this study, the researcher analyzed the questionnaire used in this study, namely Cheng's (2004) Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI). This questionnaire was used to determine the level and type of writing anxiety. The data analysis is presented as follows:

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of the SLWAI based on the level of writing FLA

	Number of students	Minimum Score	Maximum Score	Frequency (%)
Total	67	30	87	100%
High Anxiety	40	66	87	59.70%
Moderate Anxiety	19	50	65	28.36%
Low Anxiety	8	30	49	11.94%

After evaluating the SLWAI questionnaire, the researcher divides the level of anxiety writing into three groups. They're high, moderate, and low. The total number of respondents is 67. The table indicates that 40 (59.70%) of students experience high levels of writing anxiety. Students with moderate levels of writing anxiety are 19 (28.36 percent) and 8 (11.94%) of students with low levels of writing anxiety. Based on the findings of the study, high levels of anxiety have become prevalent. As a result, the researcher concludes that most students experience a high degree of writing anxiety.

These results, however, are not similar to (Kabigting et al., 2020; Liu, 2020; Rezaei & Jafari, 2014) who found that the majority (more than 80%) of their participants had high writing anxiety score. In my context of the study, the not majority of the students had high anxiety writing score which valued under 60% and the other results are moderate and low anxiety.

Discussion

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Type of Foreign Language Anxiety in Writing

Table 3: Overall Descriptive statistics of the SLWAI based on the type of FLA in writing

	N	Minimum Score	Maximum Score	Mean	Std. Deviation
Cognitive Anxiety	67	1	5	3.05	1.03
Avoidance Anxiety	67	1	5	3.03	1.03
Somatic Anxiety	67	1	5	2.89	1.02
Total/General Anxiety	67	1	5	2.99	1.03

As shown in Table 3, all of these scores are moderate with a mean of more than 2.99 for all strategies. The data in Table 3 shows that all research subjects can be categorized as a moderate level of anxiety. The standard deviation from the overall result is 1.03. The mean value is greater than the standard deviation, thus indicating that the result is representative enough. This is because the standard deviation is a reflection of a very high deviation, so the data spreader shows normal results and does not cause bias. From the three types of anxiety categories, cognitive anxiety had the highest mean score (3.05). The second anxiety most frequently faced by the learners was avoidance anxiety which valued 2.03. The third position was somatic/psychological anxiety achieved the lowest score of 2.99.

Cognitive Anxiety

The result of the questionnaire implied that cognitive anxiety was the most marked by students of John Senior High School. It was shown by the highest score of 3.05. Cognitive anxiety refers to the cognitive aspects of the experience of anxiety, including negative expectations, preoccupation with performance, and concern about other people's perceptions. The way students write an essay is strongly influenced by the expectations of other students or teachers. That is, cognitive anxiety is a type of writing anxiety that discusses students' negative expectations about the appearance of their writing as well as fear of other things (Cheng, 2004).

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics of Cognitive Writing Anxiety

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
COG000026R	67	1.00	5.00	225.00	3.36	1.00
COG00010	67	1.00	5.00	219.00	3.27	1.14
COG00024	67	1.00	5.00	217.00	3.24	1.09
COG00008R	67	1.00	5.00	216.0	3.22	1.13

				0		
COG00003	67	1.00	5.00	210.00	3.13	0.97
COG00017	67	1.00	5.00	189.00	2.82	1.13
COG000021R	67	1.00	5.00	188.00	2.81	1.00
COG00001R	67	1.00	4.00	172.00	2.57	0.80
Valid N (listwise)	67					
Average					3.05	1.03

As shown in Table 4. Descriptive Statistics of Cognitive Writing Anxiety above, the highest score in cognitive anxiety is item 26R valued 3.36 refers to preoccupation with performance. It indicates that the students afraid about their writing would be rete very poor. The lowest score in cognitive anxiety is item 1R valued at 2.57 about nervousness. In my context of the study, when the students ask to write compositions in English nervousness would be predicted to be insignificant. This result is supported by the previous study that cognitive anxiety is its predominant type, as reflected in performance concerns and high expectations (Rezaei & Jafari, 2014).

Avoidance Anxiety

The result of the questionnaire implied that Avoidance anxiety is a type of anxiety in which students avoid writing. This is the behavioral aspect of the experience of anxiety. For example, students do not come to a writing class or do not do writing assignments. This is the most dangerous type of writing anxiety because students will avoid writing. They won't do anything in writing class. Students cannot get any results in their writing. This type of writing anxiety is dangerous because in this condition students will avoid writing assignments (Cheng, 2004).

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics of Avoidance Writing Anxiety

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
AVO00019	67	1.00	5.00	265.00	3.96	0.93
AVO00006	67	1.00	5.00	219.00	3.27	1.14
AVO000027R	67	1.00	5.00	199.00	2.97	1.01
AVO00014	67	1.00	5.00	196.00	2.93	1.15

AVO000022R	67	1.00	5.00	194.00	2.90	0.96
AVO00004R	67	1.00	5.00	180.00	2.69	1.10
AVO00012	67	1.00	5.00	168.00	2.51	0.89
Valid N (listwise)	67					
Average					3.03	1.03

Avoidance anxiety is displayed in Table 5. This indicates that the average avoidance anxiety is 3.03. These involve the highest value in avoidance anxiety in item number 19 which valued 3.96 refers to the avoidance in writing English compositions if there is an assignment in a classroom. The students would do their best to avoid themselves writing English compositions. In line with this finding, as stated by Horwitz (2016); Yayli & Genc (2019) many students encountered high to average writing anxiety, it is predictable that the students would have exhibited avoidance behavior. The lowest score of avoidance anxiety occurred in item number 12 which had a score of 2.51. Item 12 is the students would do their best to avoid a situation when they have to write in English. It indicates that they would keep writing because of the assignments though they do not want to write in English.

Somatic Anxiety

Somatic anxiety refers to a person's understanding of the psychological consequences of feeling anxiety, such as nervousness and stress. Often students feel anxious about high anxiety when they're under a time limit and they haven't come up with any ideas. In somatic anxiety, students feel anxious and tense when given a time-limited writing task (Cheng, 2004). As shown in Table. Descriptive Statistics of Somatic Writing Anxiety indicates that somatic anxiety has the lowest score among types of anxiety above. The somatic anxiety was valued at 2.89 out of 5. It means that this anxiety is moderate. However, the finding is not the same as the result previously reported by Yayli & Genc (2019) that somatic anxiety was the most common type of anxiety among students

Table 6. Descriptive Statistics of Somatic Writing Anxiety

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
SOM00013	67	1.00	5.00	220.00	3.28	1.04
SOM00002	67	1.00	5.00	214.00	3.19	1.02
SOM00015	67	1.00	5.00	211.0	3.15	1.08

				0		
SOM00007	67	1.00	5.00	190.00	2.84	1.04
SOM00018	67	1.00	5.00	188.00	2.81	0.87
SOM00009	67	1.00	5.00	187.00	2.79	1.12
SOM00023	67	1.00	5.00	144.00	2.15	0.96
Valid N (listwise)	67					
Average					2.89	1.02

Somatic anxiety consists of 7 items questionnaire. The standard deviation is 1.03. This shows an even distribution of results in each item. The highest score in somatic anxiety is item number 13 which is valued at 3.28. Item 13 indicates that the student's thoughts become jumbled when they write English compositions under a time constraint. They will feel very anxious when they're under a time limit and they haven't come up with any ideas. The lowest score is displayed in item number 23 valued (2.15). Item 23 is related to nervousness which is they will feel their whole-body rigid and tense when they write English compositions. It indicates that item 23 is insignificant among participants of this study.

Conclusion

Writing anxiety is natural and usually happens to students when writing essays in English. After conducting this research, several points can be concluded. The most dominant type of anxiety that high school students usually experience when writing English compositions is a type of cognitive anxiety. The SLWAI test already has shown that the type of cognitive anxiety in writing got 3.05. In short, this type of cognitive anxiety becomes the highest type of anxiety among the two other types of anxiety that students usually feel when writing compositions in English. It is indicated that this study is the same as previous studies that reported cognitive anxiety in writing English compositions (Hartono & Maharani, 2020; Jebreil et al., 2015; Kusumaningputri et al., 2018). Avoidance behavioral anxiety got 3.03 points and became the second type of anxiety that students usually feel. The last position for writing anxiety that students feel is the type of somatic anxiety that gets 2.89 points.The paper also found the level of anxiety that high school students feel when writing compositions in English. The results showed that 59.70% of students experienced high levels of anxiety when writing English composition. At moderate anxiety levels, there were 28.36% of students feeling that they were experiencing moderate anxiety. From 11.94% of students

experienced low levels of anxiety when they were assigned to write English compositions.

Based on the findings of this study shows that students feel anxious when having negative expectations, preoccupation with performance, and concern about other people's perceptions and having to write English composition in a limited time. It would be nice for students to relax their minds when they are doing their job the high school and students are advised to be able to control their level of writing anxiety. The researcher advised investigating further with a greater number of participants to find out about writing anxiety levels in foreign languages. Then, researchers could focus on a similar topic with different aspects not included in the study. Further research can be done to measure whether there is a correlation between the level of anxiety experienced by learners and their performance in writing English composition.

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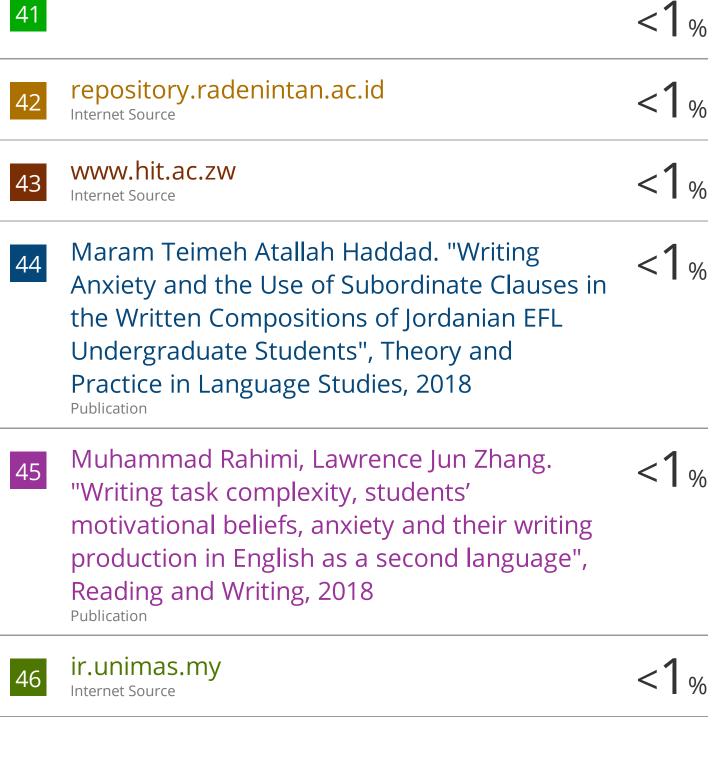**34** Wulandari Saputri, Aloysius D., Herawati Susilo, Hadi Suwono. "QASEE: A Potential Learning Model to Improve the Critical
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